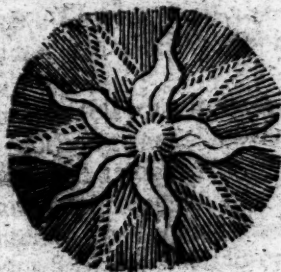


**THE
STAR-CHAMBER
EPITOMIZED:**

OR A

**Dialogue betweene Inquisition a Newes
Smeller, and Christopher Cob-web a Keeper of the
Records for the Star-chamber, as they met at the Office
in Grayes-Inne.**

*Wherein they Discourse how the Clarke
used to exact Fees, and of the likely alteration.*

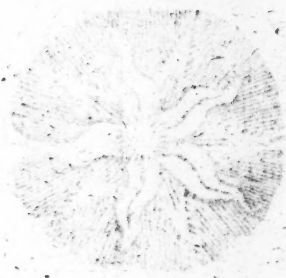


Printed Anno Dom. 1641.

THE
STAR CHAMBER
EPITOMIZED

Dialogue between Inquisition & a
Smeller, and Conscience, God with a Key of the
Awards for the sinners, as they meet at the Office
in Graves-hill.

Wherein they Discourse how to Cleanse
the Heart from the filth of sin.



THE STAR-CHAMBER

Epitomized.

OR,

A DIALOGVE betweene

Inquisition a newes-Smeller, and Christopher

*Cob-webbe a keeper of the Records for the
Starre-chamber.*

In. **M**Y old friend *Christopher Cob-webbe* how
goe all things at your Office, what is it
full Terme with the brave Sparkes of
your Court?

Cr. Truly Sir I am sore afraid the Terme is at his
full hight, I beleeve I have layd all the Records in
their severall places, and placed them in due order
so little purpose.

In. Why I pray thee tell what is the matter, I hope
the Parliament doth not meddle with so great a
Court as your high Court of *Starre-chamber*.

Cr. For my part I know not what the Parliament
either doth or intendeth to doe, but this I am sure of,
all my Masters that had vsed to sell some of their pa-
pers so deare as they doe at the Lottery, walke from
one end of the Office to the other fishing, and piti-
fully complaine and say their time of Angell-gathe-
ring, they are sore afraid, is at an end.

In. Is it possible any thing can discourage the Sparks of your Office had they bin corrupt, as I believe it is impossible?

Chr. No truly, I think they were never corrupt; for they were honest men enough in all Conscience to be Lawyers.

In. Why are not Lawyers so honest as other men? Doe you know any thing to the contrary?

Ch. No Sir I dare not say to the contrary; for I have all my livelyhood from amongst all these large Bundels of law, which I have here placed in their order, and cleansed them from the Cobwebs, wherewith they were plentifully hung.

In. They are very large indeed, they cost something in writing.

Chr. I believe you, for they have bin coppied, ingrossed, written, rescribed, prescribed, and transcribed forty times over.

In. But what did the *Chants* use to pay for so many times writing?

Chr. Yes that they did, and in ready money too, the sparkes of our Court would not be procrastinated, prologue, or demurred.

Inquis. But I hope their Rates were conscionable; were they not?

Cob. Yes! they did pay but xij.d. a sheet for the Coppy. *In.* That was something deare, but how did they write them?

Cob. Very conscionably, some 15 lines in a sheet, with some 4 or 5 words in a line, which straddled so wide as an ordinary *French-man*.

In. In my opinion xij.d. a sheet was something deare.

Cob. Alas! that was not all, they must pay to the *Gent.*

(3)
Gent. in the Cur. finger d Claves for the expedition
and for the writing, besides the xij. d. a sheet for the
Coppie.

In. Thou now tells me of a thing more
then ever I heard of; is it possible, a thing may be
copyed and ingrossed, and not written, that the Client
must pay xij. d. a sheet for the copy, besides money
for writing, and expedition? Surely both the Masters
& the clarks of your Offices, have brave times of it.

Cob. Yes, they had brave times of it, but now (if we
may credit their owne report) these dayes are done,
and they must suffer now for all their exactions, and
extortions, for the squeezing and screwing their Cli-
ants. *In.* How I pray did they squeeze their Clients?
C. Why it had bin almost so good for a man to have
bin two Termes in the high Commission (which is
now in faire possibility to be purged from it's exactions,
by those sure Curers the *Parliament Doctors*)
then one Terme in the *Star-chamber*.

Inquis. That is impossible sure.

Chr. Oh these Gent. have had brave times of it; for
had a client come some 50. or 60. miles for a *subpoena*,
they would have made him to have attended at least
3. dayes, when they could have dispatched it in halfe
an houre, and *Pun* in the mackereled tailed Gowne,
would have made him to have paid 5. s. for his extra-
ordinary care and labour, though it belonged to his
Office to take forth the writ *gratis*, and besides hee
should have paid at least xij. d. more then his due for
the Fee of the Writ.

In. This was intollerable exaction, but I pray thee
proceed.

Chr. Had a good Fellow but killed a Coney with-
in halfe a mile of a Gent. Parke, *Sh-fault* Fee that

sowes the seed of dissention for our Court (though the Gent. that owed the Parke never knew of it) would straight have him up, and would draw a Bill in Parliament the compasse of a mourning Cloke, wherein he would set forth, that contrary to the peace of our Sovereigne Lord the King, the people being unlawfully armed with Guns, Swords, Bowes and Arrowes, and furnished with Dogs, nets, and other Engins, there hunted, killed, and destroyed all his deare and game of Conies, with more superfluous words then are contained in a *Callie, eia*, & the poore ignorant Clyant being ferched up, and seeing all these strange matters laid to his charges would withall his heart give halfe he was worth to be rid of this unjust businesse; and then must be forced to compound with *Spy-fault* and these other spongy Gent., who would looke so contemptibly upon the poore fellow, as a Brasen faced Jaylor will upon a Malefactor.

In. But what in case the poore fellow had not ready mony, would they not give him some time to furnish himselfe?

Cr. No they had no more conscience nor beleefe then the compounded fat bawd in the middle of *Beech-lane*; For had he not ready mony they would rap out twenty Basiliske oathes, and cry *Curat Lex*.

In. But I pray thee to what use was the money taken, and how was it employed?

Cr. To build neither *Hospitalls*, nor *Almes-houses*, neither the King, Common-wealth, nor party wronged was the better for it; it was for the onely benefit of our large conscientious Clarkes.

In. I pray thee proceed?

Chr. Had a poore Clyant that was to put in his answer

swer to one of these or such like unconscionable matters, or to appeare upon some occasion in the Court, but neglected halfe an houre more then the time limited: the two Clarkes would have agreed together to informe the Court of the Contempe, and straight have him censured; which with their subtille devises for Fees and such like would have bene twice the value of the offence, and the poore Clyant should surely pay every farthing, or else lye in prison, and out of hand too a writ then would be sued forth for the levying of that in halfe an houre which is something under three dayes.

Jn. But I pray thee explaine who were these two Clarkes.

Chr. Why the one was to be for the plaintife, and the other for the Defendant.

Jn. Is it possible the two adverse Clarkes should agree to cōfess the poore Clyant? then I perceiue it is full time these things should be looked unto.

Chr. It is true as I tell you; for though they would in the presence of the ignorant Clyants raile at one another, and accuse one another, of undue proceeding, yet at night at a Taverne or else-where in some private place they would divide the spoyle & laugh at the silly ignorance of the poore Clyant; they have a thousand of these wayes: I have known them make the Clyant pay for expedition in the middle of a long vacation when they have had nothing at all to doe, yet many times made the defendant to put in his answer and take a Coppy of the Bill when the plaintife hath signified he is satisfied, and that they are agreed?

Jn. Surely then the Clarkes of your Offices are verie rich.

Chr. Yes

-chr: Yes only some of them are: but there is
 then some who have laid out more money then was
 their owne for the purchasing of places in our Of-
 fices. And how doe they take in
 2000. Faith for them who lived long in our Office
 as Ministers preach conscience to their underlings,
 and say they must write more close with their words,
 with reas before they could never write wide enough,
 and the rest that have laid out more then their owne
 whole estates upon their Office: hang downe their
 dejected heads, all say they are utterly broke, and
 know not what course to take, and I myselfe must sing
 the same song, for I faile in my trade too: yet I hope
 my generous Masters will let mee have this benefit
 for all my good service to make my best profit of
 all these large Roles of parchment, which I will sell
 to Hugh Hugginbottle at the signe of the 2 a halfe
 penny leaves in *Three needle street*, who will sell
 them by retails to furnish all the large measuring
 Taylors in Towne: for they are fit for nothing else,
 and I hope this will be sufficient to maintaine mee in
 an honest way. And so farewell all *Scandalous*
 Exaction.

FINIS.

